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of her as conceived Immaculate in the mind of God before time was? Some scholar and connoisseur must pronounce, and who so fit as Mr. Carmichael?

Sir Walter Armstrong* is a bold man and an impassioned. Only incredible courage could have let him undertake to compress all the art of three kingdoms into 312 small clearly printed, thickly illustrated pages; and let it be said hastily that they are admirable pages, every one, and that the arts are therein compressed. Only inconceivable passion could carry him through such superb claims for the race that he holds a brief for; and by the way, while he is all for the Celts, the British are very near his heart. It is not enough, though it is entirely Irish, to insist that Whistler's art was mainly British, in spite of his American birth, French training and anti-English pose. Nor is it enough to urge that English ivories may be distinguished by their having "more sobriety of conception and earnest simplicity of expression" than the Continent affords. (It is surely a slip of the pen which affirms on page 140 that the casket in the British Museum is not of ivory, but of the bone of the whale—"whale's bone" to our ancestors meant the walrus tooth.)

In England's behalf he likewise possesses himself of Meryon's art, though he writes the word quite wrongly with an accent. Charles Meryon got his name from an English father, but he got nothing else. He is Baudelaire's kin and Gérard de Nerval's. As soon might the Gothic of Notre Dame or Impressionist painting be handed over to the British Isles. The author flings in his net and all is fish that comes to him. "The art of wood-engraving may almost be claimed as an English invention—as practically in Italy and Germany it was a delicate mechanical process at the service of an art." This is midsummer madness! And to feel the admirable quality of the book many discounts must be made.

When some three or four years ago Mr. Berenson† finally published the long-awaited volume on the North Italian Painters, every one savoring to the full, its refined and penetrating addi-

* "Art in Great Britain and Ireland." By Sir Walter Armstrong. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.

† "A Sieneze Painter of the Franciscan Legend." By Bernhard Berenson. New York: The John Lane Company, 1909.

tions to his theory of æsthetics was still unsatisfied and looked forward the more keenly to what should come next. That fourth volume on Italian Painting was only the close to the quartette of indispensable handbooks. Nowhere have sounder words been written on the æsthetics of painting than the series embodies—nowhere in English, perhaps, any so important. But they are too few. To express the principles is only a part of any demonstration; it remains as well to deduce the consequences, to illustrate and distinguish, to establish and amplify. When a man stands at his ripest hour, with his mind at its best and happiest, then he should offer his best and profoundest thought. The day of little books is past; the time of postscripts has not come. But still Mr. Berenson teases our expectations, and instead of his *magnum opus* reprints a little special study of a very minor painter. To be sure, this unassuming volume hides grave matter; not only does Mr. Berenson reconstruct exquisitely a charming figure that Mr. Langton Douglas discovered for us so few years ago, and reproduce lovely pictures that he himself discovered, he modifies and more than half unsays certain dogmatic utterances of ten or fifteen years ago on the supremacy of Florentine painting and the hopeless inferiority of line to mass. He would hardly, we may judge from this, again dismiss so cursorily the rare genius of Matteo di Giovanni and his mates and forerunners at Siena. And, furthermore, he now deliberately fills out an aspect that the handbooks had left untouched and supplements them superbly with the indication of all that he might discuss in a strictly religious art. Still, this is a mere hint, an adumbration. We caution Mr. Berenson not to dally too long before he offers the firm reality of the great book he owes his generation.

FICTION.

IN a charming old-fashioned poem a little girl who has been by night to watch the fairies at work reports that she saw "the drops of water made and the ears of the green corn fill." So one feels in reading "Celt and Saxon";* here one has a book in the making hewn out like Michael Angelo's last sculpture,

* "Celt and Saxon." By George Meredith. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910. (By courtesy of "The Forum" and Mr. Mitchell Kennerley.)